



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL RIGHTS
EXECUTIVE

LINDA V. PARKER
DIRECTOR

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Contacts:

Trevor Coleman, Director of Communications
Detroit: 313-456-3790 Lansing: 517-373-8787

Harold Core, Public Information Officer
Lansing: 517-241-3986

Michigan Alliance Against Hate Crimes and Michigan Department of Civil Rights Present:
“Michigan Response to Hate: Building United Communities”

Lansing, MI – This Sept. 6, 2007, the Michigan Department of Civil Rights (MDCR) and the Michigan Alliance Against Hate Crimes (MIAAHC) will be hosting the “MI Response to Hate: Building United Communities” conference at the Kellogg Conference Center in East Lansing, Michigan. The conference will examine the serious and escalating problem of hate crime incidents in communities through-out the state.

“The latest U.S. Census ranks Michigan as the most segregated state in the nation and the FBI Bureau of Justice Statistics ranks Michigan as the state with the third highest number of reported hate crimes in the nation,” said Linda V. Parker, Director of the Michigan Department of Civil Rights. “Considering that intense segregation precludes quality intercultural relationships, any community which responds to hate with silence allows the hate to speak for them.”

The conference runs from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM and will feature Governor Granholm and two nationally renowned experts on hate crimes; Dr. Randy Blazak, Director of the Hate Crimes Research Network at Portland State University and Mark A. Potok, Director of the Southern Poverty Law Center’s (SPLC) Intelligence Project and Editor of Intelligence Report magazine,

one of the most highly regarded operations monitoring the extremists in the world today.

Governor Granholm will give remarks during the Lunch Plenary.

The one-day conference comes on the heels of two back-to-back white supremacist rallies in Kalamazoo and near Jackson last month. It is designed to help Michigan communities develop community-based response systems to hate and bias incidents. Conference organizers say these response systems will increase the effectiveness of community leaders in their efforts to defend diversity and acceptance.

For more information on the Michigan Department of Civil Rights or the above conference, visit <http://www.michigan.gov/mdcr>.

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